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New York

President:	Mr. Adada	(Congo)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. García-Moritán
	China	Mr. Li Zhaoxing
	Denmark	Ms. Tørnaes
	France	Mr. Douste-Blazy
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Greece	Mr. Valinakis
	Japan	Mr. Shiozaki
	Peru	Mr. De Rivero
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mrs. Beckett
	United Republic of Tanzania	Ms. Mtengeti-Migiro
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

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06-34290 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 2 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

The President (*spoke in French*): In response to the requests of Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, Nigeria and the Sudan, I understand that the Council has agreed to extend invitations to those representatives, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

In response to the request of Qatar, I shall take it that the Security Council has agreed to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to welcome all the Ministers and participants at this meeting.

I now invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Mr. President, let me thank you and all your ministerial colleagues who have made the effort to come to New York at such short notice for this meeting. That the Council is meeting at this level, and so promptly, shows that you all realize what a historic opportunity we now have to bring peace to Darfur, and how urgently we need to act if that opportunity is not to be lost.

Let me start by congratulating the Government of the Sudan and the faction of the Sudanese Liberation Movement that signed the Abuja peace agreement last Friday. It is they who have created this opportunity. We must also commend the African Union mediator, Salim Ahmed Salim, for his tireless efforts throughout the many rounds of negotiations; and Presidents Sassou Nguesso and Obasanjo, as well as their international partners — Bob Zoellick, Hilary Benn and many others — who deserve special mention for their decisive role in the final stages of the process.

But this is not a moment for anyone to bask in congratulations or rest on their laurels. Darfur is still far from being at peace, as the events of yesterday have so tragically reminded us. There is a vast amount to be done, and no time to lose.

First, there are significant rebel leaders who have not yet signed the agreement. We must all do what we can to convince them to choose peace over conflict for the sake of their people. If this tragedy continues because of what they did, or failed to do, history will judge them severely.

Next, we must do everything in our power to ensure that those who have signed the agreement actually implement it on the ground, and that the people of Darfur can survive the next few months. For that, they need both protection and sustenance, since, driven from their homes and farms, they cannot feed themselves. Sustenance for them also means protection for those who are bringing them relief.

Right now, there is only one force on the ground that can even begin to provide protection: the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). Therefore, our immediate priority must be to strengthen that force so that it can move ahead with implementing essential elements of the agreement and providing real security for the displaced people.

I believe, however, that we all now agree that this can only be a stopgap measure, and that, as soon as possible, AMIS must be transformed into a larger and more mobile United Nations operation, better equipped and with a stronger mandate. We are now mobilizing all our energies to make that happen.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is working closely with the African Union and AMIS to help meet its immediate needs. We have already dispatched staff to the region to work on this, and more will be going in the next few days.

We aim to agree as fast as possible, with our partners in the African Union, on what additional resources AMIS will require to implement key points in the Abuja agreement, and then to hold a pledging conference, possibly in Brussels, in early June. But I appeal to donors not to wait for that conference. They

need to be very generous, starting right now. We cannot afford to lose a single day. I appeal to everyone in Darfur itself to help AMIS do its job. Attacks like yesterday's, in which an AMIS interpreter was brutally killed, must not be encouraged, condoned or tolerated by any of the parties.

No less urgent is the need to raise more money for emergency relief. Right now, the region is facing the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Without massive and immediate support, the humanitarian agencies will be unable to continue their work, which means that hundreds of thousands more will die from hunger, malnutrition and disease.

Meanwhile, we must and will speed up our planning for the transition to a United Nations operation in Darfur — which was already requested by the Peace and Security Council of the AU as long ago as 10 March and authorized by the Security Council on 24 March in resolution 1663 (2006).

Let us not underestimate the challenge that this implies. Helping to protect the people of Darfur and to implement the Abuja agreement will be one of the biggest tests this Organization bas ever faced — perhaps the biggest since those in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia in the early 1990s. But it is a challenge we cannot refuse and, having accepted it, we cannot delay.

It is clear from the work we have already done that a follow-on United Nations force will have to be much larger than the current AMIS and will need major logistical support from Member States that are in a position to provide it. The next step is a technical assessment mission to Darfur itself. During that mission, the United Nations and the AU will undertake a first-hand assessment of the situation on the ground and will consult with the Sudan's Government of National Unity and with the other parties on what is required to implement the peace agreement. No peacekeeping mission can succeed without the support and cooperation of the parties at the highest level.

Accordingly, I have written to President Bashir to seek his support for the assessment and I hope very soon to be able to discuss it with him directly. His support for that vital mission is essential. Meanwhile, I appeal once again to all parties, and to the Government in particular, to show immediate respect for the ceasefire in Darfur and to prove by their actions their determination to honour the agreement they have signed.

For its part, the United Nations — by which I mean the Secretariat, but I count on the support of this Council — will do everything in its power to help the Sudanese people close this tragic chapter in their history.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Congo and representative of the presidency of the African Union.

On behalf of the current Chairman of the African Union, Mr. Denis Sassou-Nguesso, and on behalf of the Congolese delegation, I wish warmly to thank the Government of the United States of America for its felicitous initiative in calling for this meeting. This is an exceptional opportunity for the Security Council and, through it, the international community to welcome the agreement concluded on 5 May at Abuja in the framework of the inter-Sudanese peace talks organized under the aegis of the African Union.

We wish here to thank and pay tribute to all countries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as all regional organizations that spared no effort, right up to the last moment, to achieve this encouraging result. The agreement represents an important phase that the African Union undertakes to consolidate by pursuing its efforts vis-à-vis the other political and military forces of the Sudan in Darfur, which we invite to join in the process.

I cannot conceal our profound concerns, however, concerning the challenges that we must urgently address in order to prevent any worsening of the security and humanitarian situations. In that regard, I pay a well-deserved tribute to the memory of the employee of the African force who was killed during Mr. Egeland's visit to a Darfur refugee camp.

It is essential to strengthen the operational and financial capacities of the African Union's operation in Darfur and substantially to increase humanitarian assistance. It is also vital to organize the donors conference as soon as possible.

As regards the management of this complex situation, it is essential to work to preserve the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, particularly in the context of the preparation of the transition, heralded in the press release of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on 10 March. The Peace and Security

Council will be meeting at the ministerial level in Addis Ababa on 15 May in order to endorse the Abuja agreement and to identify the modalities of the transition. Immediately thereafter, the African Union will come here to present the conclusions of its work to the Security Council.

We therefore intend to rely on the United Nations, our partners and the entire international community to engage in activities that will be consistently concerted, harmonized and coherent. Such cooperation will ensure the success of the tremendous undertaking to which we are collectively committed.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call on the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Margaret Beckett.

Ms. Beckett (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Today, after three years of war and with the signing of the Darfur peace agreement at the African Union-led peace talks in Abuja, the people of Darfur at last have a chance for peace. Our meeting today enables us to respond to that opportunity and to ensure that the African Union (AU), the United Nations and others are equipped to meet the challenge it involves.

Like the Secretary-General, may I venture to pay tribute to the efforts of President Sassou-Nguesso, President Obasanjo, AU Chairman Konaré and AU Special Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim for their tireless work in bringing the talks to a conclusion. I would like to give the agreement they delivered the United Kingdom's full support.

I urge the parties to respect their commitments and to implement the agreement without delay. Again like the Secretary-General, I urge the remaining rebel groups to sign up to the agreement, which does represent the only hope for the peace, security and development of the region and the Sudan as a whole.

But the agreement is only the start of rebuilding Darfur. This Council and the wider international community face three challenges. The first is to sustain the African Union Mission in Darfur (AMIS). The AU, in its first-ever peacekeeping mission, has done a remarkable job, and that in exceptionally difficult circumstances. We must urgently strengthen AMIS to ensure that the ceasefire prevails. As you said, Sir, I hope that a pledging conference will be convened without delay, and I call on States and international organizations to provide assistance. The United Kingdom will do its part and has just contributed an additional £20 million.

Our second challenge is to speed up transition to a United Nations force in Darfur. We need detailed planning proposals from the United Nations, intensified consultations with potential troop-contributing countries and, above all, the immediate dispatch of a military assessment mission to Darfur. The Government of the Sudan said that it would allow that once a peace deal was signed. I look forward to the Sudanese representative confirming his Government's agreement to transition and to the immediate arrival of the assessment mission.

Our final — and, sadly, our continuing — challenge is to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. The humanitarian situation in Darfur is getting worse. Yet despite that the amount of humanitarian aid has decreased as compared to last year. Here again, the United Kingdom has just pledged and additional £9 million. I urge others to do the same.

The United Kingdom also stands ready to play its part in the wider reconstruction of Darfur, so that its people may return home and live in peace — something that we around this table may take for granted but which for millions of people in Darfur remains a distant hope.

What was agreed on paper at Abuja must now be implemented on the ground. It is time for the international community to rally to Darfur's security and humanitarian needs. Since its inception, the Security Council has stood at many moments of history. Now is such a moment. For the first time in three long, hard years of war, the people of Darfur have some hope. Let us resolve today not to let them down. Today the Council supports the Darfur peace agreement. It supports the African Union. It supports transition to a United Nations force. It supports the people of Darfur. By doing so it honours the values on which the United Nations itself was founded.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I am pleased to see you, Mr. President, presiding over this meeting. We wish you and your delegation success in your work this month.

Russia was pleased to welcome the signing at Abuja of the peace agreement between the Government of National Unity and the Sudan Liberation Movement. An important step has been taken towards inter-Sudanese reconciliation, the foundations for which were laid more than a year ago by the agreements in Naivasha.

To a significant extent, achieving a peace agreement was promoted by the active participation of the international community — first and foremost through the tireless mediation efforts of the African Union. Progress in the talks was also possible through the constructive position of the Sudanese Government, which demonstrated readiness for compromise solutions. In order for the peace process to become truly irreversible, it is necessary that all the participants in the Abuja talks seize this historic opportunity and join the comprehensive agreement.

In the current circumstances, strengthening the potential of the African Union Mission is a significant priority. It will be the African peacekeepers who in the coming months will have to continue to fulfil an extremely complex mandate that includes humanitarian functions and providing assistance to the Sudanese parties in implementing the comprehensive peace agreement.

We agree with the view of the Secretary-General and the African Union that the deployment and effective action of a new, integrated United Nations mission that also covers Darfur will require the cooperation and support of the Sudanese parties, especially that of the Government of National Unity. We are convinced that resolving that matter should be done through constructive dialogue. The planning for the future operation continues to be of great importance. In that regard, we expect specific recommendations from the Secretary-General.

The political settlement of the situation in Darfur should serve to promote real change in the critical humanitarian situation in the region, where hundreds of thousands of people find themselves on the brink of hunger. We support the consolidated efforts of the international community, under the aegis of the United Nations, aimed at finding the earliest possible solution to the difficult humanitarian problems in Darfur. The Russian Federation will continue to lend all types of assistance to help strengthen the political settlement in Darfur, in the interest of the unity and territorial integrity of the Sudan and of the strengthening of peace and security in the region. The Russian peacekeeping contingent is already contributing to the stabilization efforts of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor Her Excellency Ms. Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the President, my fellow ministers and the members of the Security Council for responding to the call for this gathering and for convening a special meeting of this body on such short notice.

The Darfur peace agreement, signed just days ago at Abuja, represents an historic opportunity for the people of Darfur to secure real peace and lasting justice. The United Nations has a vital role to play at this hopeful moment. The United States urges the Security Council to quickly pass the draft resolution that we circulated yesterday.

I have visited Darfur. I have seen the unspeakable suffering and heard harrowing stories of survival — stories that are shared by 2.5 million men, women and children who were driven and displaced from their homes and who now live in camps in the Sudan and Chad. For tens of thousands of others death came brutally at the hands of Janjaweed marauders. The United States has characterized this wanton campaign of violence as genocide. Yesterday, President Bush reaffirmed that judgment.

With the signing of the Darfur peace agreement, we really have an opportunity to help end the long nightmare that has befallen the people of Darfur. The source of the conflict in Darfur is a political problem as old as the Sudan itself. Historically, the Government of Khartoum has not been able to rule all of its citizens justly. The recent civil war with rebels in southern Sudan killed millions of people. It was ended only with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which addressed the deeper political problem of how the Sudanese Government would share power and wealth with the people of its southern region.

In that way, the Darfur agreement is a worthy complement to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. We applaud the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement of Minni Minawi for embracing the promise of peace.

That accord would not have been possible without the leadership of the African Union (AU) and the individual contributions of President Sassou Nguesso, President Konaré and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, and especially that of President Obasanjo of Nigeria. The United States was proud to join with other international partners as well in that effort.

The Darfur peace agreement is the foundation on which to begin building a future of freedom, security and opportunity for the people of Darfur. Each of the parties has pledged to cooperate in meeting its unique and important obligations, from disarming and demobilizing militias to building an inclusive political process and to sharing wealth and generating development in Darfur. Most important, the agreement sets out a path that can return the people of Darfur to their homes. It is now vital for all of Sudan's neighbours to support the peace agreement as well. In addition, the international community must insist that all parties remain accountable and that the agreement is completely and verifiably implemented.

It is now more important than ever to have a strong United Nations effort to ensure that the agreement's detailed timelines are monitored and enforced. The accord clearly states that neutral peacekeepers have an essential role to play in that process. We applaud the heroic efforts of the African Union Mission in the Sudan, which has helped to reduce large-scale violence. This is an extremely difficult job, and the AU troops have performed admirably. Recognizing this, the African Union expressed its desire on 10 March to transition its Mission in the Sudan to a larger, United Nations-led, force that can do more to protect the people of Darfur.

The draft resolution now under discussion would honour that request. It would strengthen and transform the AU force into the effective core of a more robust United Nations-led mission, and it would empower this new peacekeeping mission with the mandate and the capabilities to protect civilians.

Just as United Nations peacekeepers play a central role in helping to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between north and south, we now need a United Nations peacekeeping force to help implement the Darfur peace agreement. We would expect the Government of the Sudan to be a partner in this effort, lending its full support to the United Nations, the African Union and others that might assist, such as NATO.

As we work to realize the hope of the Darfur peace agreement, the international community must do more to alleviate the suffering of the people in Darfur. Hunger and disease are still claiming innocent lives, and the World Food Programme has announced that it is beginning to cut rations because it is not receiving sufficient contributions. The United States has provided nearly all of the support that the World Food Programme's mission in Darfur has to date received. President Bush has requested of the Congress an additional $225 million for the Sudan, $150 million of which would be for Darfur. Today, I call upon all nations to do their part to help the World Food Programme feed and care for the people of Darfur. The United States appreciates the Dutch offer to host an international conference in a few months to support development and reconstruction in Darfur. The United States will attend, and we urge others to do so as well.

This is a time of testing for the international community, especially for the United Nations. The plight of the people of Darfur stirs the conscience of all human beings. But conscience alone will not feed starving people and save innocent lives — or bring peace to troubled lands. This is not a challenge for Africa alone, or for America alone. It is a challenge for the entire community of nations, and it is one that cannot be taken lightly. If the idea of an international community is to mean anything, if the founding principles of the United Nations are to be more than just dreams and if the notion of our responsibility to protect the weakest and the most powerless among us is ever to be more than just an empty promise, then the Security Council must act. We must pass this draft resolution and we must seize this momentous opportunity to restore hope to the people of Darfur.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Li Zhaoxing, Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, to take the floor.

Mr. Li Zhaoxing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): A few days ago, the Sudanese Government and the Sudanese Liberation Movement signed the Darfur peace agreement in Abuja. This represented significant

progress in the Abuja process and signified that the peace process in the Sudan has arrived at a new historical turning-point. China is deeply gratified at this development and would like to express its sincere congratulations to the Sudanese Government and to all the Sudanese people. This development demonstrates once again that, with the support of the international community, African problems can be solved through political negotiations by relying on the wisdom of the Africans, using African ways and under African leadership.

This achievement of peace has been difficult to come by. The African Union (AU) has invested a tremendous amount of energy and has made relentless efforts to that end. At the last moment in the negotiations, both the Sudanese Government and the Sudanese Liberation Movement displayed great flexibility. China highly appreciates their efforts and at the same time would like to urge those factions that have not yet signed the peace agreement to proceed on the basis of the long-term fundamental interests of the Darfur people and respond promptly to the requirements set out by the AU.

The signing of the Darfur peace agreement is only the first step in a thousand-mile march: there are more important, more difficult and more complex challenges ahead. Comprehensive, timely and faithful implementation of the peace agreement requires not only that the various Sudanese parties fulfil their commitments and comply with the agreement, but also that the international community provide effective help. Due to constraints in the areas of personnel, equipment and funding, the capacity of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) has been extremely strained. In a few months' time, the resources of AMIS might even be totally depleted. Assisting AMIS is the consensus wish of all members of the Security Council and the international community. The top priority at this moment is to turn that consensus into a reality and help strengthen the capacity of AMIS, thus creating a good foundation for the implementation of the Abuja agreement.

Transition from AMIS to a United Nations-led operation is a decision in principle made by the AU, and the United Nations Secretariat has carried out relevant preparations for that purpose. China hopes and trusts that the Sudanese Government and the various factions in Darfur will seize, and make full use of, the current momentum and will speed up consultations with the Secretariat so that the relevant preparations can be completed as early as possible.

I wish to take this opportunity to stress once again that the sole purpose of a United Nations operation in Darfur is to assist the Sudanese Government and the various factions in Darfur in implementing the Abuja agreement. Therefore, the consent and cooperation of the Sudanese Government are prerequisites for the deployment of a United Nations operation.

China is deeply worried at the lack of improvement in the security and humanitarian situation in the Darfur region. We urge all parties concerned to be faithful to their commitments and to ensure the freedom of movement of humanitarian relief workers, so that necessary humanitarian goods can be delivered to all refugees and internally displaced persons in a timely manner. Currently, the international community is faced with the urgent problem of the serious inadequacy of humanitarian relief funds and materials in the Darfur region, which threatens many relief agencies with the prospect of closing down and withdrawing. It is imperative that the international community provide assistance as soon as possible in order to solve this burning problem.

As a member of the international community, China is willing to work with all others and to try our best to help the Sudan attain peace, stability, prosperity and development and build a harmonious society in which all factions coexist in peace and in which the people enjoy security and well-being.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite Her Excellency Ms. Asha Rose Mtengeti-Migiro, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania, to take the floor.

Ms. Mtengeti-Migiro (United Republic of Tanzania): Let me at the outset, Sir, congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. During our presidency, in January, we benefited a great deal from your support and that of the other members of the Council. We have no doubt that under your able leadership the Council will be able to conduct its work smoothly. In that regard, I want to assure you of the support and cooperation of the delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the United States initiative to convene this timely meeting on Darfur.

We are meeting at a very critical moment as far as the conflict in Darfur is concerned. The two-year intensive peace negotiations under African Union leadership and with the unwavering support of the Security Council were crowned with the signing of a peace agreement last Friday in Abuja. The signing of the peace agreement marks a major breakthrough in the efforts to end the Darfur conflict. We congratulate the Government of the Sudan and the leadership of the largest faction of the Sudanese Liberation Movement on signing the peace agreement.

We wish to thank Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim and his mediating team for successfully guiding the parties to this historic stage. We, equally, recognize and appreciate the positive role played by the African leaders — particularly President Olusegun Obasanjo, President Denis Sassou Nguesso and President Alpha Omar Konaré — the League of Arab States, the European Union, the United States and the United Kingdom in winning the support of the parties that signed the draft peace agreement.

The arduously negotiated Abuja peace agreement offers a balanced and forward-looking framework for peace in Darfur. We recognize that the peace agreement is not totally inclusive, as not all the parties are signatory to it. Nonetheless, we strongly believe that the agreement is an important step on the path towards lasting peace in the Sudan in general and in Darfur in particular. We therefore strongly urge the remaining two groups to join ranks with the other parties in accepting the peace agreement.

As far as we are concerned, the peace agreement has all the significant ingredients that can help restore peace in Darfur. These include the call for a ceasefire, disarmament of the militias, the integration of the rebel fighters into the national armed forces and a protection force for civilians in the Darfur-Darfur dialogue.

The Security Council and the international community at large must give full support to the parties and the African Union with a view to ensuring that the signed peace agreement is fully implemented. At the same time, we call upon all parties not to do anything that will undermine the implementation of the peace agreement.

It is unfortunate that while we are celebrating some positive developments in Abuja, the humanitarian situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate. We are particularly disturbed about the continued attacks against civilians and humanitarian operations. We need to adopt a comprehensive approach that prevents further atrocities and suffering in Darfur and increases humanitarian efforts.

We are pleased with the ongoing visit by Mr. Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, to the Sudan, in particular Darfur. We consider the visit to be one of the first tangible outcomes of the Abuja peace agreement on Darfur. At the same time, we believe that the visit will help in assessing the humanitarian situation on the ground, including with regard to access, the security situation in the camps and the level of assistance.

It is unfortunate that that there has been a significant decrease in funding for humanitarian assistance in Darfur. The prospect of daily food rations being cut in half is indeed worrying. We hope that the decrease was due to logistical, rather than resource, constraints. Nonetheless, we appeal to the donor community to provide additional assistance to the refugees and displaced persons while they wait for repatriation following the peace agreement.

Let me conclude by recognizing the commendable job done by the African peace mission — the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) — in Darfur. We hope that the Abuja peace agreement for Darfur will pave the way for the transfer of AMIS to a United Nations operation. What seems to be critical at this juncture is the strengthening of AMIS. The positive developments in Abuja and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation on the ground demand the strengthening of AMIS in the shortest possible time. We welcome the decision of the Government of the Sudan to allow the United Nations assessment mission to proceed to Darfur.

Finally, we thank the delegation of the United States for having prepared the draft resolution. We fully support it.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Philippe Douste-Blazy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, to take the floor.

Mr. Douste-Blazy (France) (*spoke in French*): It is rare that the Security Council meets to discuss a

happy event, but that is the case today. We are particularly glad to welcome the agreement reached in Abuja that finally lays the groundwork for peace in Darfur.

It is equally gratifying that this meeting is being held under your presidency, Sir. The Abuja agreement, is above, all a success for the African Union. We know the important role your country and you, personally, played. We would also like to pay tribute to the international community for its support for the African Union (AU) in this matter. I would also like to welcome the personal commitment of the Secretary-General in this regard.

That success, of course, creates obligations. We are only too aware that the Abuja agreement, although an essential step, is just a point of departure. It is, in a way, the first page of a road map that concerns us all and that should mobilize us all.

First, we must ensure that all the parties to the conflict join with the Sudanese Government and Minni Minawi's Sudan Liberation Movement in rallying to the peace agreement. We must encourage the parties to hold a conference representing all of the people of Darfur. It will be of fundamental importance to include in the process those forces that were not represented in Abuja.

Finally — and in this regard we are counting on the AU and the Secretary-General — we must absolutely take the necessary measures as soon as possible to strengthen the African force in Darfur. The African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) has played an essential role; it will be given new tasks as a result of the Abuja agreement. It must also be ready to pass the baton to the United Nations. Indeed, it is incumbent upon us — in particular the Security Council — to accelerate preparations for a transition from AMIS to a United Nations peacekeeping operation, as the conditions for such an operation are now almost in place.

In referring to the road map, I want to be careful not to omit two other major concerns.

First, it is essential that the international community remobilize in order to overcome the very troubling deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Darfur, as well as in Chad. Since the summer of 2004, France has committed military aircraft to provide all necessary assistance to Darfurian refugees in Chad. In that same spirit we call on the international community to support United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations in their remarkable efforts.

Secondly, it is now absolutely necessary that we approach the question of Darfur from a regional perspective. Already, the stability of Chad has almost been compromised by developments in Darfur. Nothing would be worse for Darfur than regional destabilization. We must work to ensure that peace in Darfur provides an opportunity to foster peace in the region.

We hope that that message will be heeded by all and that the Security Council will provide itself with the means necessary to ensure that that is the case. The tragic incidents that occurred in Nyala during Mr. Egeland's visit to a camp of internally displaced persons are very disturbing. They show the degree of tension that exists and should prompt us to act quickly at the security level as well as at the level of humanitarian assistance. In this context, I would like to say that the killing of an AMIS interpreter was absolutely unacceptable.

Above and beyond those incidents, the Abuja agreement is a sign of hope, first and foremost for those suffering people to whom our thoughts go out today. But that sign of hope will be translated into reality only if the various parties marshal their strength to exploit all the potential of the agreement. In this area, as in others, the United Nations will have a key role to play, notably — when the time comes — by taking over from the African Mission in Darfur, whose efforts have been remarkable.

The President (*spoke in French*): I invite Her Excellency Ms. Ulla Tørnaes, Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, to take the floor.

Ms. Tørnaes (Denmark): On behalf of the Government of Denmark, I would like to commend the African Union, as well as the Sudanese parties, for their efforts and diligence in working towards a peace agreement. The seventh round of Abuja talks lasted more than five months. The commitment shown by African leaders, as well as other international partners and observers, deserves our recognition and sincere thanks.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge the leaders of the Government of National Unity and the

faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement represented by Mr. Minni Minawi. Both parties have shown leadership and courage by accepting the necessary compromises and signing the Darfur peace agreement.

The remaining leaders of the movements — those who have yet to accept the agreement — must be made aware that by hesitating they fail their own people, who most of all want to see peace and security for themselves and for future generations. It is our hope that strong international support for the implementation of the Darfur peace agreement will show that those who choose to stay outside the agreement will also have denied themselves influence over the future of Darfur. There is still room, but not a lot of time, for the leaders of the two remaining movements — the Justice and Equality Movement and the other faction of the SLM — to join the agreement that has now been achieved.

As a member of the Security Council, Denmark has consistently supported the position that all measures, including sanctions, should be put to use as and when appropriate. It is crucial that we encourage — and if necessary apply — pressure on those parties or individuals who stand in the way of peace. We continue to support that approach in order to achieve a lasting peace in Darfur and in the Sudan as a whole.

Denmark is committed to supporting the implementation of the Darfur peace agreement. The signing in Abuja was only a first step, but a very crucial one. The agreement calls for a Darfur-Darfur dialogue as well as post-conflict reconstruction; both will need continued support from the international community.

Denmark has, from the outset of this crisis, provided substantial support for humanitarian activities in Darfur. Yesterday, I set aside further means, and we will closely monitor the situation in the coming months. I strongly urge the international donor community to provide immediate support for the humanitarian efforts in Darfur.

Today's meeting takes place on a positive note. However, we remain deeply concerned over the continued fighting and violence in Darfur. No one should forget the dire situation that, at this very moment, continues to face many thousands of people in Darfur. Improved security and better access for humanitarian workers are imperatives. All restrictions on the work of humanitarian organizations must be lifted immediately. Leaders who fail their own populations in that regard are, in effect, neglecting their core responsibilities.

Access to people in need is critically dependent on the security situation on the ground. The African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) has done a commendable job under very difficult circumstances. We continue to recognize its important role, while we also believe that it is essential to secure a transition from AMIS to a United Nations operation as quickly as possible.

Denmark strongly encourages the Sudanese Government to agree to allow the United Nations planning team to visit Darfur. That is crucial not only in order to prepare for a United Nations peacekeeping operation, but also to ensure that AMIS receives all the support needed during the transition period. Together with our partners, we stand ready to provide support during this process.

I would like to close by expressing, on behalf of the Government of Denmark, our recognition and thanks to the African Union and its leadership for showing unwavering support and consistent engagement in fostering an agreement in Abuja. The leadership we have seen, and the readiness to apply pressure on peers when needed, have generated international respect. That will undoubtedly serve as an indispensable foundation for an increasing role by the African Union in conflict resolution on the African continent.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Yannis Valinakis, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to take the floor.

Mr. Valinakis (Greece): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's public meeting on the situation in Sudan, and particularly Darfur, an issue of great concern for the international community, given its grave security and humanitarian implications for the wider African region.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement to be made by the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

The signing of the peace agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army on 5 May 2006 in Abuja constitutes a

very significant step forward, which we hope will create a new momentum in Darfur and will mark the beginning of a reversal of the deplorable humanitarian situation.

The agreement in Abuja also epitomizes the determination of Africa to resolve its problems in a collective and effective manner, in cooperation with its international partners. In that regard, I would like to commend the African Union (AU); your Government, Mr. President, as Chair of the African Union; the Government of Nigeria; and, of course, the AU chief negotiator, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, and his team for their tireless mediation efforts to achieve a positive conclusion of the Abuja talks. Credit should also be given to the AU's international partners, such as the European Union, the League of Arab States, the United States and the United Kingdom, among others, for engaging actively in the Abuja process over the past few years.

It is indeed unfortunate that the smaller faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement have refused to sign the agreement. We urge those parties to overcome their remaining difficulties and to subscribe to the agreement. We hope that they will soon realize that it is in their interest to agree to the agreement proposed by the AU for the sake of their own people.

The apparent breakthrough in the Abuja talks does not allow the international community to be complacent. The implementation of the agreement is likely to be more challenging than its signing. The time frames should be fully respected so that the implementation moves forward as smoothly as possible.

At the same time we cannot but express grave concern over the continuous deterioration of the humanitarian situation. The humanitarian operation launched in Darfur in late 2003 — which is the largest humanitarian operation in the world and which has been extremely effective — is now at risk because of rising insecurity and a lack of funds.

In the light of those facts, it is vital to address the following key issues in the next few weeks.

The agreement signed in Abuja cannot be implemented without a strong international presence on the ground, which will monitor the compliance of the two parties to the agreement. The African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) has spared no effort to bring security and stability to Darfur in extremely adverse circumstances. It is therefore extremely important that AMIS be further reinforced, given that its role in the implementation of the agreement will be of paramount importance.

The European Union and its member States have provided planning and technical, financial and equipment support to both the military and the police components of AMIS, while reaffirming their readiness to continue to provide such support. Greece has also contributed to that effort, within its capabilities, and we will continue to do so.

With an agreement reached in Abuja, it is now more crucial than ever that the planning for the blue-hatting of AMIS be accelerated. In that respect, we look forward to the discussions in the Security Council and the expeditious finalization of the draft resolution proposed by the United States. We believe that by the end of this year, a United Nations mission should be in a position to take over from AMIS, because such a mission is the only viable option for providing sustained stability and security in Darfur over the long term. In that regard, we look forward to the swift dispatching of an African Union-United Nations technical assessment mission to Darfur.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation must be addressed. In that regard, the restrictions on non-governmental organizations and humanitarian agencies should be lifted. In addition, humanitarian assistance to Darfur should be increased; in that regard, Greece is examining ways in which it can be of most help.

The tension and instability on the border between the Sudan and Chad should be resolved as soon as possible on the basis of the Tripoli Agreement. If not addressed, that problem may potentially have a detrimental effect, with serious ramifications, on the humanitarian situation of the entire region.

Finally, Greece expresses its commitment, both as a member of the European Union and as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, to support the effective implementation of the agreement reached in Abuja, including through the mandate of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), which is chaired by Greece.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite the distinguished Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign

Affairs of Japan, Mr. Yasuhisa Shiozaki, to take the floor.

Mr. Shiozaki (Japan): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important meeting and guiding our deliberations.

Japan commends the Government of the Sudan and the Minnawi faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) for their courageous decision to sign the Abuja peace agreement. I would like to pay tribute to the diplomatic efforts of the African Union, led by Chief Mediator Salim Salim, and of the heads of African States, including President Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo and President Obasanjo of Nigeria, and international partners, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom.

The Abuja peace agreement is a further step for the consolidation of peace in Darfur. We call on the remaining factions of the SLM and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) to promptly join the agreement, and we urge all parties to sincerely commit themselves to implementing it.

I myself paid a visit to Sudan in February of this year. Although it was a short stay, I visited Juba, spent a night in Rumbek in southern Sudan and observed with my own eyes the status of the implementation of the North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement. My impression during the trip was that, despite various challenges, slow but steady progress had been made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement through well-coordinated efforts by the United Nations and other actors. If we can do this in the North-South process, why not in Darfur? I therefore strongly hope that the Abuja peace agreement will be implemented as soon as possible with the strong commitment of the parties.

I wish to take this opportunity to inform the Council that Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan just concluded a successful trip to Africa earlier this month. It was the first visit by the Japanese Prime Minister to African Union headquarters. While applauding the dedicated efforts by African peacekeepers, we fully recognize the need to strengthen the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in order to improve the security situation in the region. During his trip, Prime Minister Koizumi announced further assistance for AMIS, amounting to approximately $8.7 million, to support its activities. We hope that this additional assistance will contribute to the strengthening of AMIS.

For transition from AMIS to a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Darfur, the agreement of the Government of the Sudan is needed. Japan therefore commends the recent, more positive response of the Sudanese Government in this regard. We hope that a United Nations-African Union joint assessment mission will be undertaken without further delay. Japan expects that following the achievement of the peace agreement, consideration of the deployment of a Darfur peacekeeping operation will be accelerated.

Japan is gravely concerned over the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Darfur since the beginning of this year. Two elements are indispensable in this matter. First is the cooperation of the Sudanese Government in facilitating humanitarian activities, and second is funding for those activities. I am pleased to report that, during his recent visit to Africa, Prime Minister Koizumi also announced additional humanitarian assistance amounting to $10 million. Our Government will continue to provide the maximum assistance possible to alleviate the humanitarian suffering in the region.

Furthermore, as the relations between Chad and Sudan have a serious impact on the situation in Darfur, we also hope that both Governments will make utmost efforts to improve their relations by complying with and implementing the Tripoli Declaration.

Let me conclude my statement by stressing once again Japan's continuing determination to extend assistance for the consolidation of peace in Darfur, and in Sudan as a whole, in light of the signing of the peace agreement.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite the distinguished Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina, Mr. Roberto García Moritán, to take the floor.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express my thanks for the timely convening of this meeting. The level of this Security Council meeting clearly attests to the importance that this body attaches to the question of Darfur.

After lengthy and extensive negotiations in the Abuja process, today we share some optimism about the signing of the peace agreement between the

Government of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement. We welcome this success and commend the efforts of the parties in achieving it, as well as all of those who were actively involved in the process. However, we believe that true pacification and reconciliation in Darfur requires that this process be inclusive and properly representative. Thus we encourage the parties that have not yet joined in the peace agreement to do so as soon as possible, without preconditions.

Now a new phase of the peace process in Darfur has been started. It will be necessary to strengthen the capacity of the African Union Mission in Sudan in order to ensure that it has the adequate resources to provide appropriate security conditions on the ground, give the civilian population effective protection and assist in implementing the agreement that has been reached — all of this without prejudice to the parallel activities of this Council to initiate planning for a United Nations operation in Darfur, which should be started without further delay.

In this regard, we call on the Government of the Sudan to make it possible for the technical assessment mission on the ground to be carried out, as it is essential to complete preparatory analysis for the future mission. We would like to assure you, Mr. President, that our delegation is fully ready to work immediately to conclude this preparatory work promptly. In this regard, we shall be carefully considering the draft resolution presented by the United States to this effect.

The people of Darfur have been suffering for too long. Their afflictions have been incalculable. It is our responsibility to work to improve the quality of their lives. Therefore we need to urgently and practically respond to the grave humanitarian situation that persists in Darfur. Our activities should be guided by a single objective: to provide relief to the suffering of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians who have experienced the most painful sufferings as a result of the armed struggle. The parties must abstain from any acts that would lead to a breach of the ceasefire and put an end to attacks immediately. The Government of the Sudan must also facilitate access for humanitarian assistance for people in need and remove all hindrances in the path of humanitarian workers.

It should also be recalled that the Government has an unconditional obligation to protect its own population. The international community must continue to lend support and assistance, not only in this crisis but also in the future tasks of reconstruction and development. All of us have obligations that we must honour.

The agreement signed on 5 May 2006 offers without question an opportunity for peace in Darfur. We must be unstinting in our efforts to ensure that it is effectively realized.

The new phase of implementation, which will undoubtedly be more demanding than the previous phase, will require the sustained commitment of all actors involved in the process. We urge the parties to fulfil their commitments and the international community as a whole to renew its commitment to the cause of peace in Darfur, which, without a doubt, will result in better and more decent living conditions for its inhabitants.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on the effective manner in which your country is guiding the work of the Security Council this month.

According to information provided by the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, more than 180,000 persons have died in Darfur since October 2003 as a result of atrocities, malnutrition and disease. In addition, it is estimated that approximately 2 million people have been displaced to overcrowded, unsanitary refugee camps, and another 200,000 refugees live in extremely harsh conditions in Chad.

Humanitarian assistance organizations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimate that, since the beginning of this year, some 10,000 people have died every month in Darfur.

In the face of this massive humanitarian disaster, Peru welcomes the peace agreement signed on 5 May in Abuja between the Government of National Unity of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement. We congratulate the African Union and all the countries that helped to finalize the agreement. We hope that the commitments agreed at Abuja will be undertaken without delay. However, for that to happen, the Abuja agreement will have to be inclusive. We must ensure that the other groups such as the Justice and Equality Movement and the minority faction of the Sudan

Liberation Movement become parties to the agreement so as to ensure the effectiveness of the ceasefire.

The Abuja agreement must be strengthened on an urgent basis. For that reason, we believe that the Council should undertake four urgent tasks.

The first relates to the humanitarian issue. Peru takes the view that lack of humanitarian assistance translates into loss of human life. The United Nations and specialized agencies such as the World Food Programme, among other specialized bodies, urgently require support so that they can provide the population with food, water and medicine. It is estimated that approximately $90 million will be needed to finance humanitarian assistance programmes.

The second task facing the Council concerns security. Along with humanitarian assistance, we must strengthen the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). This is a matter of vital importance, because, unfortunately, earlier ceasefires were not observed. We must prevent such a situation from recurring and the conflict from reigniting, given in particular the profound lack of trust between the parties on the ground.

The third task is urgently to dispatch a technical mission of the United Nations to Sudan in order to assess the situation, with a view to the participation of a United Nations peace force.

The fourth task is the deployment of a United Nations peace operation in Darfur. To that end, we believe that planning should begin immediately for the transfer of the peace operation, with a more robust mandate that is focused on the protection of civilians, and with a better equipped, more mobile force with deterrent capacity. The primary purpose of such a mission would be to give effect to the Abuja peace agreement and, above all, to protect the civilian population.

I have no doubt that, now that the peace agreement in Abuja has been signed, the Government of National Unity of the Sudan will cooperate with respect to the deployment of a United Nations force in Darfur. Nor do I have any doubt that the Government of the Sudan will do its best to halt attacks on United Nations personnel, AMIS personnel and humanitarian assistance personnel in displaced persons camps.

Peru endorses the draft presidential statement supporting the Abuja peace agreement; calling for the strengthening of AMIS; promoting the planning of a United Nations operation in Darfur; and expressing its deep concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) *(spoke in Arabic)*: We are meeting today in the wake of an important and historic step, the result of joint efforts at the international and regional level that have succeeded in putting out the flames of the conflict that has been raging in Darfur for a number of years. We wish to express our thanks to the African Union and our gratitude for the mediation efforts made by President Olusegun Obasanjo; President Nguesso of the Congo; and the Special Envoy of the African Union, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim. We would like also to pay tribute to the Government of National Unity in the Sudan for its flexibility and to the other parties to the conflict in Darfur for their cooperation. That led to the signing of the peace agreement, which we hope will be signed by the other parties.

We would like to express special thanks to the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the European Union, as well as to all States sponsoring the peace process in Darfur, for their efforts. They have shown that diplomacy is the best means of resolving chronic conflicts that arms and violence cannot solve.

The achievement registered as a result of this joint effort is but a first step towards establishing security and peace in Darfur and in the Sudan as a whole. That makes it incumbent upon all parties to take the remaining steps so as to ensure its success and render it a concrete fact on the ground. The parties must realize that their interests are intertwined and that it is in the interest of all to maintain stability.

It is imperative, in order to build on the success achieved so far, that all parties evince a sense of responsibility, especially those that have not yet signed the peace accord. The Council must bring the necessary pressure to bear to deliver a clear message to those parties to join the peace process and to refrain from attempting to derail it.

The crisis in Darfur afflicts primarily human beings; it is they who pay the price of conflict, especially women and children. Although we are convinced that this responsibility is above all a

national one, we believe that the international community also bears the responsibility for fulfilling the obligation of ensuring undiminished flows of assistance, honouring the promise of providing the support and resources already pledged in order to consolidate stability, security and peace; achieving reconstruction; and guaranteeing the voluntary return of displaced persons to their homes. That may also require assigning a vital role in this regard to the Peacebuilding Commission, in coordination with the Sudan's Government of National Unity.

The spirit of responsibility demonstrated by the Government of National Unity of the Sudan is the strongest evidence of its sincere desire to settle the Darfur crisis. That will require the spirit of cooperation to be maintained, and we feel that it is important for the Security Council to work with that Government, in respect for its sovereignty, in order to secure its consent and cooperation as regards the expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan to include Darfur.

In conclusion, we pay tribute once again to the efforts that the African Union Mission in Darfur has made and continues to make, despite the limited resources at its disposal.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Slovakia.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): At the outset, we, too, would like to welcome the signing of the Darfur peace agreement in Abuja, which we believe will lead to restoring peace and security and end the suffering of the people of Darfur. Slovakia commends the instrumental role of the African Union and especially the tireless mediation efforts of Mr. Salim Salim in bringing about the positive outcome of the Abuja talks. We appreciate the support and active diplomatic engagement of all international partners and their contribution to the negotiations.

We also commend the flexibility and responsible approach of the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement during the final stage of negotiations in Abuja.

We call on all parties in Darfur to seize this window of opportunity to reach lasting and sustainable peace in Darfur. In that context, we encourage all movements in Darfur that have not yet done so to join the peace agreement and to start its implementation on the ground expeditiously.

In order to effectively support and assist the implementation of the peace agreement, the African Union Mission in Darfur (AMIS) must be strengthened and its operational capabilities enhanced as soon as possible so as to be able to cope with the highly complex situation on the ground.

We commend the role played and contribution made to date by AMIS, which has been operating under very difficult circumstances. From our point of view, however, the current AMIS deployment is not adequate and its transfer to a United Nations peacekeeping mission is the only viable option. It is vitally important that the joint United Nations-African Union technical assessment mission to Darfur visit the region without delay to start preparations for the transition.

Last but not least, it is essential that the international community, in cooperation with the Government of the Sudan, address the grave humanitarian situation in Darfur. The Government of the Sudan should allow unhindered access to humanitarian assistance and remove any obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian aid. We appreciate the commitments undertaken so far by the international community to provide the necessary funding.

Finally, we thank the United States delegation for preparing the draft resolution on the Sudan and the delegations of the Congo and the United Kingdom for presenting the draft presidential statement on the Sudan. We support its adoption.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Ghana.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, let me express my delegation's delight in seeing you, Sir, the Foreign Minister of a sister African country, chairing this meeting. We are also happy to join other speakers in welcoming the other foreign ministers and dignitaries who are here this afternoon. We thank them for that noble and invaluable gesture of support for the peace process in Darfur.

At the same time, I wish to take this opportunity to convey the sincere apologies of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ghana for his inability to participate in this meeting, due to the rather short notice and earlier commitments. Nonetheless, Ghana deeply appreciates the significance of this meeting, which

lends critical support to the Abuja peace accords. It is our hope, therefore, that the outcome of today's meeting will be manifested in greater unity of purpose and stronger resolve on the part of the international community to bring to a speedy end the intolerable human suffering in Darfur.

Above all, this meeting should lead to increased understanding and cooperation between the Government of the Sudan and the international community in seeking lasting peace and security in Darfur. The Sudan must resume its place as a force for positive change in Africa and deserves every encouragement and support to do so.

It is most appropriate on this occasion to pay special tribute to the many leaders and eminent personalities who actively helped in brokering the Abuja accords. In particular, we owe a debt of gratitude to President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, the host of the inter-Sudanese peace talks; to President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo, the current Chairman of the African Union (AU); to Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the AU Special Envoy for Darfur and Chief Mediator; and, not least, to our international sponsors from the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union, and a host of other benefactors who must share in the pride of our success.

We also congratulate the Government of the Sudan and the larger faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) on signing the accords. We urge the factions that did not sign the agreement to seize the opportunity to become part of the solution to the crisis in Darfur, rather than remain a hindrance. Clearly, those factions that still believe in a military solution instead of a negotiated settlement to the problem are merely deluding themselves.

The signing of the Abuja peace accords truly signifies the possibility for a new beginning not only for the people of Darfur but, in fact, for all Sudanese. Nonetheless, as has been pointed out time and again, the signing of the accords merely provides a launching pad for further progress.

Difficult and protracted as the negotiations were, we should brace for the more challenging task of implementing the agreements. We share the view that it is only through a faithful and effective implementation of those accords that the political, economic and social root causes of the conflict can be addressed.

It is now the duty of the Sudanese Government and people to give the agreements practical meaning by working together with the international community to change their country for the better and make life worth living for all. The recent contacts between the Government of the Sudan and United Nations officials have been a source of great encouragement to my country. The participation of the Sudanese delegation in this meeting is indeed a strong sign of the growing confidence between the authorities of the Sudan and their international counterparts.

We believe that, having taken this huge step forward, the parties to the Abuja accords must remain faithful to their respective commitments and demonstrate a resolve worthy of leaders who genuinely have the interests of their people at heart. Ghana hopes that the Security Council mission to the Sudan next month will enhance the confidence as well as the growing partnership between this Council and the Government of the Sudan.

While welcoming the Abuja accords, we should recognize that they were signed only by the Government of Sudan and the larger faction of the Sudanese Liberation Army. The smaller faction of the SLA and the Justice and Equality Movement still remain outside the peace process. The international community should therefore exert pressure and make strenuous efforts to bring all interested parties and groups into the peace framework. Only such a course of action would make possible the Darfur-Darfur dialogue and conciliation, which is a critical component of a comprehensive peace process in Darfur.

For my delegation, early proof of the viability of the accords — indeed, their first dividend — would be a quick improvement in the humanitarian situation on the ground. We are informed that, so far, only about 20 per cent of the $648 million needed has been pledged to the United Nations. The humanitarian agencies need funding to be able to reach many more needy people.

Ghana is also of the view that that the time has come to take concrete steps towards strengthening the African Union Mission in Sudan in anticipation of the transition to an expanded United Nations operation with a strong African participation and character. We therefore support the early holding of the pledging conference planned by the Secretary-General and look forward to a generous response.

The joint African Union-United Nations technical assessment mission is a key part of that transition, and we urge the Sudanese Government to embrace it as a partner in the search for peace. Trust and cooperation will serve the cause of peace better than mistrust and confrontation. So much time, energy and resources have been invested in this crisis because we all have a common stake in the dignity and security of humanity.

The international community at large, and the United Nations in particular, should, in partnership with the Government of the Sudan and the African Union, monitor and remain actively engaged in the implementation of the Abuja accords. This Council should also live up to its responsibilities by not hesitating to hold accountable those who either violate the accords or impede their smooth and effective implementation.

Finally, we thank the United States delegation for preparing the draft resolution, which we fully support.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Ursula Plassnik, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria.

Ms. Plassnik (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU).

The signing of the Darfur peace agreement, last Friday, represents a major step forward for Darfur, for the Sudan and for the entire African continent. Throughout the process, the European Union fully supported the efforts of the African Union (EU). At the sixth EU-Africa ministerial troika meeting, held yesterday in Vienna, we agreed on a joint final communiqué. We acknowledged that the Darfur peace agreement paves the way for the rapid improvement of the humanitarian and security situation on the ground, including the protection of the civilian population, the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of lasting peace and reconciliation in the region. We expressed appreciation to the African Union and the Nigerian facilitation for their efforts, as well as to the international community for the support it provided to the African Union throughout the negotiation process.

I would like to focus on four aspects that the European Union regards as crucial in connection with the Darfur peace agreement that were broadly shared during our talks in Vienna yesterday by the African ministerial troika.

First, it is of the utmost importance for all parties to the conflict to subscribe to the Darfur peace agreement. We strongly urge the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement faction led by Mr. Abdul Wahid to sign the agreement before the deadline of the next meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, which is currently expected to be held on 15 May. The leaders of those movements have a historic responsibility to contribute to securing peace in Darfur. In the longer term, we also look forward to the possible contribution of the planned all-inclusive Darfur-Darfur dialogue in that respect.

Secondly, as Mr. Minawi said at the signing ceremony at Abuja last Friday, the goal of the Darfur peace agreement is to establish peace on the ground, not just on paper. The European Union reminds all parties to the conflict of their responsibility to implement all provisions of the Darfur peace agreement in good faith and in full. In that context, I would like to reiterate the EU's support for making full use of the measures set out in resolution 1591 (2005) against those who are impeding the peace process.

Thirdly, there is an urgent need to strengthen the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) in order to enable it to fully carry out the critical role assigned to it in the implementation of the Darfur peace agreement until such time as a United Nations force can take over those functions. We fully support the convening at an early date by the Secretary-General and the AU of a pledging conference to support the strengthened AMIS.

Fourthly, the European Union believes that the agreement reached at Abuja opens the way for the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Darfur. It is imperative that the necessary preparatory steps now be undertaken without delay. Chief among those is the dispatch of a joint United Nations-AU assessment mission to the Darfur region, in order to enable United Nations planners to get a clear picture of planning needs. In that respect, we look forward to the Secretary-General's detailed planning proposals for a United Nations operation in Darfur, and we encourage him to hold early consultations with potential troop-contributing countries for such an operation.

The European Union's support for the African Union will not waver over the coming months. We

have recently decided to contribute another €50 million from the African Peace Facility to AMIS, in addition to the €162 million already provided. We are also ready to continue to provide technical and logistical support to AMIS. Furthermore, the European Commission recently pledged €100 million for a humanitarian and initial recovery package. We are confident that other partners will continue their strong support for the Darfur peace process as well.

We must insist that all parties involved live up to their commitments contained in the Darfur peace agreement. The tragic events yesterday in the camp for internally displaced persons at Kalma are just another reminder of how dire the situation bas become, and that the humanitarian and security situation needs to be urgently improved. After the terrible years of war and violence, we have a responsibility towards the people of Darfur: to give them hope and to make peace in Darfur a reality.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Agnes van Ardenne-van der Hoeven, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands.

Ms. Van Ardenne-van der Hoeven (Netherlands): The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the Austrian Minister on behalf of the European Union (EU).

We finally have a peace deal on Darfur. I would like to pay tribute to some of the parties that relentlessly fought for that deal: Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim and his African Union team, President Obasanjo of Nigeria, Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick of the United States and Hilary Benn of the United Kingdom. I would also like to congratulate the Sudanese parties that signed the Darfur peace agreement last Friday.

The Darfur peace agreement is a milestone. But, at the same time, this peace deal is only a piece of the puzzle. Not all of the feuding parties are on board yet. The rebel factions that have still not signed the Abuja agreement should do so soon. There is another peace deal — the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the north and the south — that also has to be implemented.

The Sudanese Government bears the primary responsibility for the well-being of its own citizens, and has to ensure unhindered access for humanitarian organizations to the camps for internally displaced persons (IDP) and to others in need.

The international community has a responsibility of its own. It includes providing more emergency aid to keep the people on the run alive. Last week, the Netherlands made another €10 million available for that purpose. I call on all other donor countries, both inside and outside the Council Chamber, to also put their money where their heart is.

Security is a precondition for development and reconstruction. The Council can help to make Darfur safe for development by deploying a robust peacekeeping mission to the area. I call upon the Sudanese Government to allow the United Nations to start the necessary planning work in Darfur in the coming days.

But before the Blue Helmets arrive at the scene, the men, women and children of Darfur will count on the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to protect them. In turn, the African Union Mission will count on us, on the international community, to support it. The workload of AMIS will increase in the short term, because of the additional tasks assigned to it in the Darfur peace agreement, such as ensuring safety in and around the IDP camps and disarming the Janjaweed and other armed groups opposed to peace. The Netherlands will provide an additional contribution of €15 million to our African partners, who are valiantly paving the way for a United Nations mission.

Having a United Nations mission on the ground is a strong signal of international commitment. It is vital that the parties to the Darfur peace agreement communicate the results of the negotiations in detail to the people in Darfur as soon as possible. In addition, other confidence-building measures also need to be taken, such as quick-impact programmes and capacity-building efforts, to help the parties to implement their commitments. After the necessary level of security is restored, we should get reconstruction going right away. At the request of the parties, this weekend in Abuja the Netherlands will chair a meeting of the Core Coordination Group, which will be composed of the Sudanese parties and representatives of the international community. We are not wasting any time: early next month there will be a workshop in The Hague to plan reconstruction activities for the short term as well as for the long term. And in September,

upon finalization of the Darfur recovery plan, the Netherlands will host a donor conference to back up these plans with financial clout.

Finally, breaking the cycle of violence and rebuilding the province of Darfur is also about the credibility of the Security Council and the international community as a whole. Can we overcome international indifference and make a difference to those who are most in need? And can we, at the highest political levels, keep our eye on Darfur and on the Sudan as a whole, even as in the long run other crises take over the headlines? The Netherlands will make every effort possible to ensure that the answer to those questions is a loud and clear "Yes, we can".

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Manis (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Permit me at the outset, Mr. President, to convey to you the apologies of your colleague Foreign Minister Lam Akol Ajawin, who owing to time constraints was unable to attend today's meeting.

I wish, Sir, to express our pleasure at seeing you presiding over the Security Council today, as you represent a sisterly African country which enjoys good-neighbourly relations with the Sudan and which is also current Chairman of the African Union and has been at the forefront of the Abuja peace talks. I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the United Nations and the Security Council for the role they have played and for the attention they have devoted to the situation in the Sudan.

Today, following an appalling war, the parties have reached agreement. Our deep gratitude goes to all those who contributed to the historic achievement in Abuja, particularly the African Union, whose forces have remained on the ground in Darfur, making every possible effort to promote peace and stability and undertaking tireless humanitarian endeavours. Moreover, it made dedicated and sincere political efforts leading to the signing of the agreement. We thank in particular the chief mediator, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, who since the day of his appointment as African Union envoy displayed determination and fortitude in carrying out a mission that seemed next to impossible, given the divergent positions of the parties at the time.

Our warmest thanks go to His Excellency President Olusegun Obasanjo of sisterly Nigeria for his personal efforts and for hosting the talks from the outset. We also thank His Excellency President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Congo, Chairman of the African Union. When President Al-Bashir passed the AU chairmanship on to President Sassou Nguesso, he promised his full cooperation in settling the Darfur crisis. Time has proven the truth of that promise.

We wish also to thank the partners who have played an effective role in reconciling the parties so that they could achieve this peace and to express our gratitude for their generous support throughout the negotiations; I refer in particular to the United States of America and the United Kingdom. We hail the League of Arab States, the European Union and Mr. Jan Pronk, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, for the role they have played. We thank all those who supported us in Abuja or through their assistance in meeting humanitarian and security needs on the ground in Darfur.

Here, I welcome the announcement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands that her country would be hosting a pledging conference in September. That will enhance the Abuja peace agreement.

There can be no doubt that members of the Council will vividly recall the historic meeting hosted by the late Mr. John Garang, former head of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army and First Vice-President, and by then Vice President Ali Osman Taha following the signing of the Nairobi peace agreement. They said on that occasion that there would be a comprehensive peace only when the Darfur crisis had been settled. Ever since then, that has been the strategic objective of our Government. The Government and every other party are duty-bound to accelerate the achievement of a political settlement, because peace is indivisible. Anyone who has followed the progress of the Abuja negotiations knows that our Government is serious and eager to achieve that objective.

Let me reaffirm that a political settlement is the key to a solution, because it would focus on eliminating the root causes of the crisis. For that reason, it remains the top priority. At the same time, my Government has made parallel efforts to address humanitarian issues. Let me mention my Government's

initiatives intended to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the agreements between my Government and the United Nations in that connection. I would also mention other efforts to improve the security situation, which will pave the way for the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as other strenuous efforts to mend the social fabric through inclusive dialogue among the citizens of Darfur with a view to restoring peaceful coexistence among the tribes, which was the situation before.

The Abuja agreement would have been impossible without the sincere determination and dedicated efforts of the mediators and of our partners. I therefore wish, on behalf of the Government of National Unity, to pledge to the Council our full commitment to implement the agreement in every detail. The Government, indeed, began implementing the agreement yesterday.

The agreement was not achieved by happenstance; it was the result of hard work and meticulous endeavours to reconcile the parties and encourage negotiations. It is therefore unthinkable that it should be abandoned: it has put an end to the crisis. We look to the Security Council to send to the parties which have not yet signed the agreement a strong and unambiguous message that they should demonstrate a sense of responsibility, reconsider their position and sign the agreement without any further delay. They must bear in mind the suffering of innocent Darfur civilians and place this above contentious demands and the quest for gains: for the sake of those civilians, they must join the march to peace.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the important fact that the Government of the Sudan has a very positive record of cooperation with the United Nations and with the Security Council. For example, with regard to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the Sudan Liberation Movement, the two parties hastened to request the Council to dispatch a mission to support its implementation.

The Abuja agreement — a historic accomplishment — will thrive only with the support of the international community. Efforts must be undertaken to foster the fledgling peace, rebuild from the ravages of war, resettle internally displaced persons and refugees and revive the tradition of coexistence among the elements of Darfurian society. We have every confidence that the international community — which has stood by the Sudan throughout the Darfur crisis, with all its humanitarian consequences — will demonstrate the same resolve and cooperation as it embarks on the challenging journey towards reconstruction.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Wali (Nigeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Nigeria in this debate on the reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan. I would like to thank the Council for having given me the opportunity to do so.

Nigeria is pleased to observe that this special meeting is taking place under the presidency of the Congo, which currently holds the chairmanship of the African Union, and against the background of the breakthrough in the peace negotiations in Darfur, hosted by my country since 2004.

The agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement — one of the parties to the Abuja talks — is historic for a number of reasons. First, it represents the triumph of doggedness and determination to confront and resolve fundamental problems separating all sides to the Darfur conflict. Secondly, it opens a new vista of genuine cooperation, without which the trust and confidence needed to heal deep wounds and reconcile divided societies, in Darfur in particular and in the Sudan as a whole, will remain a distant dream. Thirdly, it signals what can be achieved when members of the international community unite and join forces with regional leaders and institutions in the search for peace, security, stability and development.

Permit me to recall the role of the African Union, whose Special Envoy and chief negotiator for the Abuja Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, has twice briefed the Council on the state of negotiations. The role of the African Union signalled the willingness of African leaders, in consonance with the Constitutive Act of the African Union, to pursue solutions to conflict situations in the continent. That explains why all the parties, throughout the process, welcomed the mediation.

We also pay tribute to the Secretary-General, whose behind-the-scene efforts and those undertaken through his representatives enabled the Organization to

stay engaged throughout. We also commend the Council for its encouragement and support, without which the clear resolve of the international community would not have been brought to bear on the negotiations. We believe, in particular, that the presence of the representatives of Africa's partners, including the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union and Canada, provided the additional impetus that facilitated the breakthrough which was celebrated at the signing ceremony.

Nigeria believes that we should look beyond the signing of the agreement to its faithful implementation in letter and in spirit. That will require the taking of urgent steps to provide reassurance — especially to those parties that withheld their signature — that the path to peace and reconciliation mapped out for the troubled region can best be pursued through a process of engagement by all parties.

There is a need to relieve the leaders and the affected population from their fear of tomorrow, and encourage them to demonstrate faith in the Sudan's future as a peaceful, united and prosperous country.

For its part, Nigeria is confident that the Government of the Sudan will make the maximum effort to prove wrong those cynics within and, especially, outside the country who have cast doubts on the ability of African leaders to rise to the challenges of nation-building in multi-ethnic and multireligious communities.

The international community has an important collaborative role to play in that process. The partnership which has worked so well in Abuja should be deepened so that, working closely with the Sudanese Government, other members of the international community can address the socio-economic challenges of Darfur. Nothing short of a Marshall Plan-like mobilization of international assistance will suffice. There should be a follow-through to donor conferences on the Sudan through the redeeming of pledges, so that the fundamental problem of underdevelopment in the Darfur region can be adequately addressed. We commend the European Union for its pledge of €100 million as its initial contribution to the implementation of the agreement.

There is also an urgent need to guarantee security for the population in Darfur. The modest effort of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), which, against overwhelming odds, has succeeded in winning the hearts and minds of the traumatized population, should be complemented by the speedy deployment of a full United Nations force. Nigeria believes that the presence of such an international force, in close cooperation with Khartoum, would reinforce a sense of security for the population on the ground. The steps already taken by the Secretary-General to engage the Government of the Sudan on that matter should go a long way towards providing such assurance. Meanwhile, the promise of logistical support to shore up AMIS in the intervening period before the deployment of a full United Nations force should be met.

Finally, the Darfur peace agreement provides the international community with a unique opportunity to deepen the peace and reconciliation process in the Sudan as a whole. The parties to the agreement have committed themselves to a political solution to the Sudanese problem within an assured constitutional framework. Let us eschew the temptation to view Darfur through the prism of individual interests. Rather, the greater objective should remain what is best for the Sudanese people as a whole. Nigeria is confident that, as in the past, the Security Council will send forth a clear message of interest and engagement with the Government and the people of the Sudan in that regard.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Laurin (Canada) (*spoke in French*): The signing of the Darfur peace agreement represents an essential step towards the achievement of lasting peace for the people of that region. Canada congratulates the signatories of the agreement on having seized the opportunity for peace. We also commend those who have chosen to associate themselves with the peace agreement. Canada is proud to have played a diplomatic role in the process, in partnership with the African Union (AU) mediation team.

The agreement marks the successful conclusion of a very complex process, as well as the beginning of a significant commitment by the international community. The agreement provides a viable basis for achieving a sustainable peace in Darfur and for addressing the needs of its people. The parties must now work together to put an end to violence and impunity in Darfur.

They must commit themselves to protecting civilians and guaranteeing safe and unimpeded humanitarian access to populations in need, and they must implement the agreement — translate words into action — and begin the difficult process of reconciliation.

(*spoke in English*)

I am addressing the Council today to say that Canada fully supports the efforts of the parties, the AU and the United Nations to resolve the conflict. Along with our international partners, we have taken a leadership role in assisting the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS).

With the signature of the peace deal, a new hope has emerged for the people of Darfur and all of the Sudan. The displaced must now be able to return home in safety and dignity. Special measures must be taken to eliminate sexual violence, and women must participate fully in the implementation of peace. Attention must be devoted to rehabilitation, reconciliation and sustainable development. In the near term, we — Canada and our partners in the international community — must enhance AMIS to ensure that that hope is translated into reality by improving the security situation on the ground. The pact must be monitored and verified, and violators and would-be spoilers must be held accountable and punished. Canada will work with our partners to ensure that AMIS has the necessary resources to enforce the agreement.

At the same time, we must proceed urgently with a transition to a United Nations mission that has a strong mandate to protect civilians. Such a transition has been requested by the African Union and would be welcomed by Canada. The time is ripe for a new level of international engagement. In that regard, the planning process must move forward as soon as possible, with continued close cooperation between the AU and the United Nations. Canada will work closely with both organizations to ensure that they have the necessary support.

Finally, reaching a sustainable peace in Darfur is vital for the Sudan and for the security of the region. It remains a priority for Canada. We urge the Security Council to remain seized of the matter.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations.

Mr. Mahmassani (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I am honoured to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. I should like to express my appreciation for your wise guidance of the work of the Council. I should also like to express my deep appreciation to the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China for his skilful guidance of the Council's work during the month of April.

The League of Arab States welcomes the Darfur peace agreement. The League expresses its sincere appreciation to President Sassou Nguesso of the Congo, President Obasanjo of Nigeria and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Special Envoy and chief mediator of the African Union, for their efforts to achieve the agreement. The League calls upon the factions that have not yet done so to promptly sign the agreement and to commit themselves to it in order to ensure lasting and comprehensive peace and stability in Darfur.

The critical situation in the province of Darfur today makes it necessary to ensure that there is concrete implementation of the agreement on the ground and that all parties comply fully with its provisions in good faith so that it can have a quick impact in terms of improving the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur. All the parties must also cooperate actively with the African Union Mission in the Sudan in its efforts to fulfil its mandate.

The humanitarian situation in Darfur urgently requires additional support to meet the humanitarian requirements of those most in need. In that connection, the League of Arab States urges United Nations Member States, regional and international organizations and the international community as a whole to provide the support necessary to help resolve this humanitarian crisis.

Together with the African Union, the League of Arab States has played a role in leading the efforts to resolve the crisis in Darfur — efforts that culminated in the peace agreement. The League of Arab States is fully confident that the Darfur peace agreement represents a unique opportunity to put an end to the acts of violence, to achieve stability and to launch

reconstruction and sustainable development processes in the province of Darfur.

There can be no doubt that the Darfur peace agreement is a historic opportunity for the parties to achieve a rational vision for the future on the basis of the sovereignty and independence of the Sudan.

The President (*spoke in French*): Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council strongly welcomes the agreement of 5 May 2006 reached at the intra-Sudanese peace talks in Abuja as a basis for lasting peace in Darfur; commends the signatories to the agreement; expresses its appreciation of the efforts of President Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo, President Obasanjo of Nigeria, in his capacity as host of the talks, and African Union Special Envoy and Chief Negotiator Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim; calls on all the parties to respect their commitments and implement the agreement without delay; urges those movements that have not signed the agreement to do so without delay, noting the benefits it will bring them and the people of Darfur, and not to act in any way that would impede implementation of the agreement; and welcomes the forthcoming meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council on 15 May 2006.

"The Security Council commends the African Union for what the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS) has achieved in Darfur despite difficult circumstances; stresses the need for AMIS to be urgently further strengthened in line with the conclusions of the Joint Assessment Mission report of 10-20 December 2005 so that it is able to support implementation of the Darfur peace agreement until a United Nations operation is deployed; calls in this regard for the Secretary-General and the African Union to convene a pledging conference without delay; and urges Member States and international and regional organizations to provide every possible assistance to AMIS.

"The Security Council stresses that the Secretary-General should consult jointly with the African Union, in close and continuing consultation with the Security Council, and in cooperation and close consultation with the parties to the Abuja peace talks, including the Government of National Unity, on decisions concerning the transition to a United Nations operation; looks forward to receiving at the earliest opportunity from the Secretary-General detailed planning proposals for a United Nations operation in Darfur; calls in this regard for the Government of National Unity to facilitate immediately the visit of a joint United Nations and African Union technical assessment mission to Darfur; encourages the Secretary-General to consult urgently with potential troop-contributing counties on the assets required for a United Nations operation; stresses that a United Nations operation should have strong African participation and character; and calls on international and regional organizations and Member States to provide the United Nations operation every possible assistance.

"The Security Council expresses its deep concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur; welcomes the visit of the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland; expresses its deep concern at the shortfall in humanitarian funding; urges Member States to make additional funds available; and calls on all the Sudanese parties to respect the neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian assistance agents."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2006/21.

There are no further speakers on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.